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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6473

BILL NUMBER: SB 175

NOTE PREPARED: Mar 20, 2012

BILL AMENDED: Feb 29, 2012

SUBJECT: Absentee Ballot Applications.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Young R Michael

FIRST SPONSOR: Rep. Richardson

BILL STATUS: Enrolled

FUNDS AFFECTED: ☒ **GENERAL**
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: (Amended) *No Voter ID Number on Pre-Print Absentee Ballot*- The bill provides that an absentee ballot application may not be pre-printed with the voter's voter identification number.

Absentee Ballot Application Forms- The bill requires the Indiana Election Commission (IEC) , not later than June 30, 2012, to modify the absentee ballot application form to request that a voter provide the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number or state that the voter does not have a Social Security number. The bill provides that the form must indicate that a voter's compliance with the request is optional.

Failure to Provide Requested Information- The bill provides that a voter's failure to provide the requested information does not affect the voter's ability to receive an absentee ballot.

Earlier Version of Absentee Ballot Form- The bill provides that an earlier version of the absentee ballot form authorized for use on June 30, 2012 may be used by a voter to apply for an absentee ballot.

Recording Absentee Ballot Application Information- The bill requires a circuit court clerk record certain information from an absentee ballot application in the statewide voter registration list.

Presence of CEB Member- The bill provides that if an appointed member of a county election board (CEB) cannot be present for the opening of the place where absentee ballots are kept, the member must designate an individual from the member's political party to be present with the key to open the place where the absent ballots are kept. The bill provides that the key of an appointed member shall be kept secure in the manner determined by that appointed member.

Study Committee Topics- The bill urges the Legislative Council to assign to a study committee during the 2012 legislative interim the topics of: (1) ballot security for an absentee ballot transmitted to and from a voter by mail; and (2) connection of the statewide voter registration list and files maintained by the Department of State Revenue (DOR).

Effective Date: July 1, 2012.

Explanation of State Expenditures: (Revised) *Absentee Ballot Application Forms-* Currently, both absentee ballot application forms (ABS-1 regular and ABS-2 mail-only) used by the Election Commission provide a box for the applicant to write in their Indiana driver's license number or the last four digits of their social security number, either of which is suitable as the voter's VIN. However, the box is currently optional for the applicant to complete the form. Minor revisions to both forms would have to be made to include a choice that the applicant does not have a social security number. Additionally, the form would have to include that the provision of the social security number is optional. Given that the forms are readily available online, the Election Commission could make the changes to the forms with negligible additional expenditure.

Study Committee Topics- The Legislative Council could assign the above topics to a summer interim study committee or a statutory committee during the 2012 interim. The committee would operate under the policies governing study committees adopted by the Legislative Council. Legislative Council resolutions in the past have established budgets for interim study committees in the amount of \$9,500 per interim for committees with fewer than 16 members.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Failure to Provide Requested Information-* Circuit court clerks would be able to record social security numbers from absentee ballot applicants within existing resources. County election boards would not be able to deny an application for an absentee ballot as a result of this provision.

(Revised) *Recording Absentee Ballot Application Information-* Circuit court clerks would have additional workload in order to enter the information from absentee ballot applications into the statewide voter registration list. Clerks are already required to file ballot application information already, but not in the list. Therefore, the additional workload would likely be absorbable within the existing duties of the clerk.

(Revised) *Presence of CEB Member-* Securing keys to the secure area for absentee ballots would likely be able to be accomplished within existing levels of CEB resources.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Indiana Election Commission; Legislative Council.

Local Agencies Affected: Circuit court clerk.

Information Sources:

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